



## **Louisiana Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

### **Newsletter**

**August 2023**

### **We're in transition...**

We are shifting our newsletter to a new format...

Please let us know what you think!

**Questions... Comments... or Suggestions?**

**Contact any member of the Executive Board**

President	Dr. Heidi Adams	<a href="mailto:hadams@latech.edu">hadams@latech.edu</a>
President Elect	John Foret	<a href="mailto:jdforet@fenstermaker.com">jdforet@fenstermaker.com</a>
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Communication Co-chair	Cecilia Richmond	<a href="mailto:crichmond@wlf.la.gov">crichmond@wlf.la.gov</a>

### **We're On The Web!!!**

**[www.labiologists.org](http://www.labiologists.org)**

# 2023 Fall Symposium



**Louisiana Chapter of the Wildlife Society**

**Oct 5 & 6, 2023**

**ULL Abdalla Hall, Lafayette, LA**

*Friday's Focus Session: Recruiting Tomorrow's Managers,  
Succession Planning in the Field of Conservation*



## **CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS!!!**

Students and professional biologists are invited to present research that is relevant to Louisiana's natural resources. Students, the first day highlights your innovative work with a full day of oral presentations of recently-completed or ongoing research projects! Professionals are limited to presenting posters, while undergraduate and graduate students may present either an oral or poster presentation. Abstracts (<300 words) for poster and oral presentations are due to John Foret ([jdforet@fenstermaker.com](mailto:jdforet@fenstermaker.com)) by 5pm on Friday, September 15, 2023.



### **AWARDS OFFERED** for best LAPB Symposium student presentations!

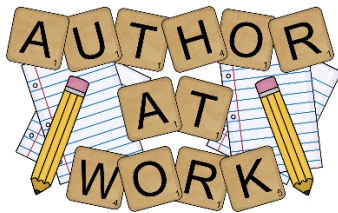
The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) and the Natural Resources Management Association (NRMA) will each present a lifetime hunting / fishing license (valued at \$500) to the student oral presentation they judge to best advance knowledge in their areas of interest.

In addition, LAPB will award cash prizes for First (\$100) and Second (\$50) place student oral presentations and student posters. Submit your abstract to have an opportunity for these awards!

### **Scholarship available!**

LAPB has a competitive scholarship program that will award \$1,000 to a student pursuing a degree in Wildlife or Fisheries Management, Forestry, Wetland Science, Marine Biology, or closely related fields. Applications are due September 15, 2023. You can find more information [HERE](#). **PLEASE**

**NOTE:** The website is being updated, if 2023 information is not available, please check back in another week.



### **Outstanding publication nomination**

Nominations for Outstanding Publication Awards should be sent to Troy Mallach ([troy.mallach@usda.gov](mailto:troy.mallach@usda.gov)) by 5pm on Friday, **September 15, 2023**. Articles should have been published in 2022, at least one author must be a paid member of LAPB/TWS, and the paper must fit one of the following categories: Popular, Basic Research, General Conservation, Fisheries, or Wildlife.

### **Symposium logistics**

- Annual membership dues for LAPB are \$25 (\$10 for students) and Lifetime memberships are available for \$150.00. Registration for the symposium is \$10 (FREE for presenting students), and there will be an additional \$5 fee for a catered supper if you wish to attend the evening social on October 5. You can pay your annual membership dues, registration fees, and social/catered supper on the LAPB [website](#) or you can pay at the door on October 5.

A block of hotel rooms has been reserved within walking distance from Abdalla Hall at the Hilton Garden Inn Lafayette for \$99/night. You can make your reservations by calling 337-291-1977 or online at: Hilton Garden Inn – Lafayette.

**LAPB Photography contest.** The LAPB photography contest is open to all registered conference attendees. Winners will be chosen by attendees and awards will be given during the evening social– so make plans to attend the social!

#### Photography Contest Guidelines:



- Photographs must be captured with a digital or film camera
- Photographs must be in color or black-and-white prints, with a minimum size of 8" x 10" and maximum size of 8" x 12"
- Entries must be mounted on a stiff 11" x 14" black backing. Framed prints will not be accepted
- Do not place your name or caption on photo. Place your name on the back of your backing
- Any wildlife/biology/landscape/research, etc. type theme will be allowed.
- There is an entry fee of \$5 per photo with a maximum of 10 entries per individual.

Registration is the day of the symposium (Thursday). Entry deadline is Thursday 12 noon. Contact Jeff Duguay at [jduguay@wlf.la.gov](mailto:jduguay@wlf.la.gov) for additional information.



#### LAPB TOWN HALL MEETING

LAPB will host a virtual "Town Hall" meeting via Zoom on Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6PM to discuss Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) resolutions. These resolutions are normally discussed at the Fall Symposium, however this year the LWF meeting will take place prior to the LAPB meeting. While no new resolutions were submitted, Rebecca Triche (LWF Executive Director) says there will be discussions on previously-approved resolutions: LWF's stance Catahoula Lake habitat/recreation management and LWF opposition to saltwater hatcheries since 2011, do we still oppose these? Some affiliate organizations will bring up discussion about a few other topics, like solar or possibly menhaden.

The resolution passed in 2023 (click text below for access to the resolution):

1. [Support for Carbon Capture but not in Lake Maurepas \(and accompanying background paper\)](#)

Also of interest: [LWF position on EPA giving state of Louisiana primacy to permit Class VI wells in Louisiana](#). We supported with reservations.

2. [Support for Lights Out Program to save birds](#):

3. [Position on Wind Energy in Gulf of Mexico](#):

LWF will also likely talk about wind energy in state waters and impact on wildlife and habitat.

Please participate in this first ever LAPB virtual Townhall meeting Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6PM. The Zoom meeting ID is 953 5007 7282; the passcode is 130035.

### **Feathers anyone???**

Marty Floyd, LAPB member and retired biologist, is assisting the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana in collecting feathers for ceremonial religious purposes. Anyone having feather they would like to donate, especially wings and tails of turkeys or waterfowl, please contact Marty. Feathers from legally harvested game species require no additional permits. Marty also has state and federal permits and tribal authorization for non-game species, contact him for additional information. Marty can be contacted at [Progne99@aol.com](mailto:Progne99@aol.com) or 337-459-0445.



### **LAPB 2022 Fall Symposium**



The LAPB Fall Symposium was held August 10-12, 2022 at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana. This year's theme was "Defense against Wildlife Diseases in Louisiana" with 23 in-person attendees and 27 virtual attendees. The symposium started Wednesday, August 10 with an optional Private Pesticide Applicator Certification Training presented by LSU Ag Extension and LDAF, followed by a Hands-on Pesticide Application Demonstration by LA Tech's Paul Jackson.

Thursday featured nine oral presentations by university students followed by poster presentations.

Awards for the best student presentations were as follows:

- Talks
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Garrett Rhyne** and Philip Stouffer, LSU School of Renewable Natural Resources. Migration Ecology of Swainson's Warblers in Louisiana.



- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **Robin Hebert** and Kim Marie Tolson, ULM Department of Biology, and Jim LaCour, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Detection of *Tritrichomonas foetus* within the Reproductive Tract of Male White-tailed Deer in Louisiana.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: **Gabrielle Fignar**, LSU Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Phillip L. Trosclair III, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and Michael A. Dance, LSU Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences. Movement Patterns of Sympatric Estuarine Finfish in Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, Grand Chenier, LA.



- Posters

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Chloe Crawford** and Ashley Long, LSU School of Renewable Natural Resources. A Few Burning Questions: A Survey to Inform Future Research on the Use of Prescribed Fire on Private Lands in Louisiana.



- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **Hannah Cauley-March**, Csanyi Matusicky, and Brian Sean Early, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. A Floristic Quality Assessment of Coastal Prairie Using Modified Whittaker-Stolger Sampling Design.

The **Fall meeting of the Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists** was held Thursday evening. Twenty-seven members plus the executive committee were in attendance.

New officers elected during the fall meeting were John Foret (President Elect), Larry Reynolds (another term as Treasurer), Ashley Long (another term as Secretary), Joshua Soileau and Cecilia Richmond (co-chairs for communication; newsletter and website).

A discussion was held on ideas for future activities that could help increase participation in LAPB. Species specific presentations, educational and mentorship opportunities, field days, and biologically oriented contests were some of the ideas presented. This discussion led to plans for a webinar on Wild Turkeys in Louisiana hosted by LAPB. (See article below for details on the success of this presentation).

The **LAPB Keynote Speaker, Dr. Tommy Michot**, presented “Multiple Lines of Evidence Indicate Survival of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Louisiana”. Dr. Michot retired from the ULL Institute for Coastal and Water Research and was a member of the Louisiana ivory-billed woodpecker working group from 2005 to 2010. As part of this working group, he assisted with efforts to locate the ivory-billed woodpecker in the state of Louisiana. He described several newly published sightings and other documentation of a potential remnant population of Ivory-Billed Woodpeckers in Louisiana. Included in the documentation are drone videotapes, photographs, and recordings, all available on the website <https://www.aviary.org> by searching for Ivory billed Woodpecker. Additional information can be found by clicking on the Conservation link and looking at Project Principalis.

Friday’s theme was “Defense against Wildlife Diseases in Louisiana”. **Dr. Jim LaCour**, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries’ State Wildlife Veterinarian, opened the day with an overview of Emerging Wildlife Diseases. Dr. LaCour gave a brief history of recent pandemics – 6 in the last 100 years, as well as several near misses. He discussed the relationship between zoonotic diseases and their potential to become infective to humans. He then presented an overview of Wildlife Diseases currently emerging or likely to arrive soon in LA.

**Jonathan Bordelon**, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Deer Program Manager, gave an update on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) for Louisiana. CWD is a neurodegenerative, infective disease found in white-tailed deer that is always fatal and has no treatment. Jonathan described infections in our region and explained the difficulty of controlling spread due to multiple factors including the extended infectious time (16 months or more) when prions can be shed before clinical symptoms begin to show. In addition, prions can be taken up by plants and spread to deer that ingest the plants, and burning does not deactivate the prion (although incineration can). CWD can also be spread by ticks and may even be spread through river water. CWD could seriously affect Louisiana’s deer herd, but also the over \$900 million that white-tailed deer hunting adds to Louisiana’s economy.



**Allison Vestal-Laborde**, Ph.D. candidate at the LSU School of Renewable Natural Resources, is studying the disease ecology of migratory waterfowl in the Lower Mississippi Flyway. She gave an update on and described the spread of the current outbreak of Avian Influenza (AI). From Oct. 2021 when this outbreak began, through Aug. 2022, more than 77 million poultry had been culled due to AI and it was estimated that more than 400,000 birds had died in the wild. With the fall migration beginning, it was anticipated that this AI outbreak would continue to spread in both wild and domestic bird populations. She explained the importance of safe handling and good hygiene with both sick wild birds and within poultry operations.

**Laura Tak Sims**, LaTech School of Agricultural Sciences & Forestry Assistant Professor of Forest Health spoke about Forest Tree Diseases and their Effects on Wildlife in Louisiana. Her current research focuses on forest health and fungal diversity. Forest health interests are generally related to invasive and emerging fungal pathogens of plants for the purpose of preventing and managing them. However, other than the major pathogens, there is very little even baseline information on the fungal players in Louisiana forests as in regards to disease, wood decay, and beneficial microorganisms. She is very interested in helping develop this baseline understanding of the fungal communities of our forests and their importance to the entire forest ecosystem.

**Max Cox**, NRCS Regional Biologist in North Louisiana gave a brief update on the White Nose Syndrome (WNS) in bats. He explained that it has a very mortality rate (90 – 100%) in infected spaces. Eleven species of bats are known to be affected by WNS, three of which are Threatened or Endangered. It is estimated that more than 6 million bats have died since 2006 from WNS. In Tennessee alone, the largest population of bats decreased by 85% in only 3 years. For more information about WNS go to [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org) or [www.whitenosesyndrome.org](http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org)

The day ended with presentation of 2022 Outstanding Publication Awards to LAPB members in 4 categories:

*General Conservation* to **Ruth M. Elsey** and **Steven G. Platt** for “Notes on the Occurrence and Reproductive Ecology of an Introduced Population of *Apalone ferox* in Coastal Louisiana, USA”

*Basic Research* to **Theodore Zenzal Jr, Michael Ward, Robert Diehl, Jeffery Buler, Jaclyn Smolinsky, Jill Deppe, Rachel Bolus, Antonio Celis-Murillo** and **Frank Moore** for “Retreat, detour, or advance? Understanding the movements of birds confronting the Gulf of Mexico”

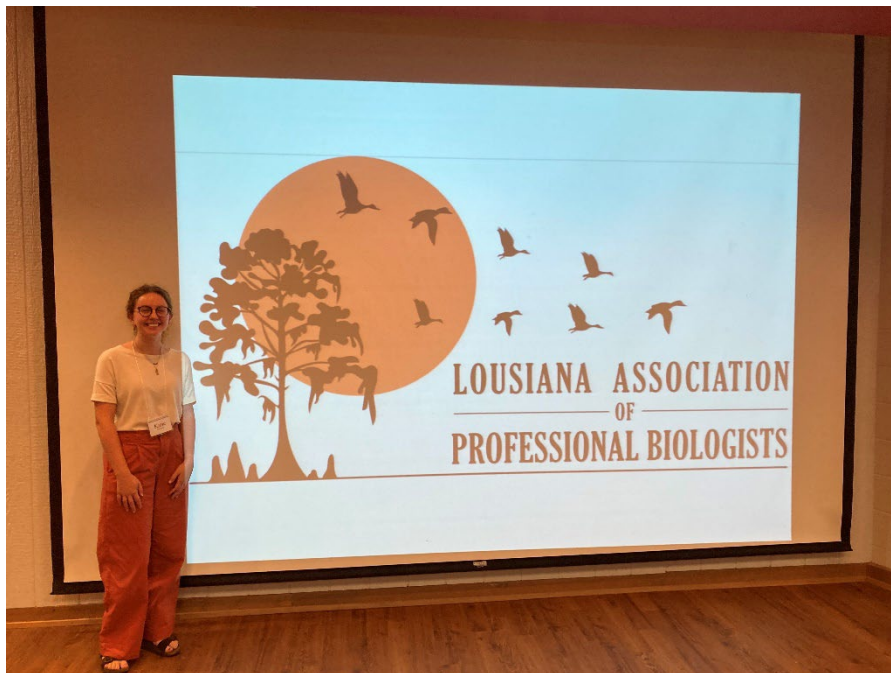
*Popular* to **Ruth Elsey** for “Examining Alligators”

*Wildlife* to **Jacoby Carter, Darren Johnson, Jeff Boundy, and William Vermillion** for “The Louisiana Amphibian Monitoring Program from 1997 to 2017: Results, analyses, and lessons learned”



### **Congratulations to our LAPB contest winners!!!**

*Logo Contest* – 1<sup>st</sup> Place to **Katie Miranda**, 2<sup>nd</sup> place to **Chloe Crawford**. Katie and Chloe collaborated, taking favored elements from each of their logos to create our new logo. Thank you for your time and talent!



*Photography Contest* – 1<sup>st</sup> place to **Brittany Wells**, 2<sup>nd</sup> place to **Dr. Kim Marie Tolson**

Symposium Topic Contest winner was **Gabby Fignar**

## **Wild Turkey's in Louisiana Spring 2023 Webinar**

Louisiana's Wild Turkey harvest in 2023 was the second best in 15 years. A webinar on the status of the wild turkey in Louisiana was hosted by LAPB on May 23, 2023. Cody Cedotal, LDWF Small Game and Turkey Program Manager, presented on the history of wild turkeys in Louisiana, restocking efforts, population trends, monitoring efforts, hunter participation and harvest, factors affecting population, and current research. Participation in the webinar was open to LAPB members as well as the public. The webinar was very informative and Cody answered questions for almost half an hour after his presentation.

The webinar recording may be accessed [here](#).